

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 55C: Limited Public Financing Of Campaigns For Statewide Elective Office

Section 1. Unless a contrary intention clearly appears, the words and phrases used in this chapter shall have the following meanings:

“Director”, the director of campaign and political finance as established by chapter 55.

“Candidate”, any candidate as defined by chapter 55.

“Statewide elective office”, the office of governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, secretary, treasurer and receiver general and auditor.

“Contribution”, any contribution as defined by chapter 55.

“Qualifying contribution”, any contribution made by an individual and deposited in a candidate’s depository account as required by section nineteen of chapter 55 during the calendar year in which elections are held for statewide elective office or the next preceding calendar year except as follows: (a) no contribution shall be considered a qualifying contribution unless the name and address of the individual making the contribution can be determined from statements required to be filed with the director; (b) no contribution shall be considered a qualifying contribution to the extent that it exceeds \$250 or would exceed \$250 when added to any such contribution previously made by the same individual during the calendar year in which elections are held for statewide elective office or the next preceding calendar year. The same contribution may be a qualifying contribution for both the primary election and the state election in a year in which elections are held for statewide elective office but no contribution shall remain a qualified contribution after the end of any such year.

Section 1A. (a) On or before the last day for filing that candidate’s nomination papers with the state secretary pursuant to chapter 53, every candidate for statewide elective office shall file with the director a statement, in a form prescribed by the director, that the candidate does or does not agree:

(1) in the case of primary candidates, to abide by the following limits on expenditures for the following elective offices in the campaign for the state primary:

Governor	\$1,500,000
Lieutenant Governor	625,000
Attorney General	625,000
Secretary	375,000
Treasurer and Receiver General	375,000
Auditor	375,000; and

(2) in the case of all candidates for statewide elective office, to abide by the following limits on expenditures for the following elective offices in the campaign for the state election:

Governor and Lieutenant Governor	\$1,500,000
Attorney General	625,000
Secretary	375,000
Treasurer and Receiver General	375,000
Auditor	375,000

The name of a candidate who fails to file any statement within the time required by this subsection shall not appear on the state primary ballot nor on the state election ballot, and the director shall inform the state secretary of any such failure.

(b) On or before the last day for filing withdrawals of nominations for the state primary, every primary candidate for statewide office who has not agreed to abide by the expenditure limit under subsection (a), and who is opposed in that primary by 1 or more candidates who have agreed to this limit, shall file with the director a statement, in a form prescribed by the director, of the maximum amount of expenditures to be made in his campaign for that primary. The name of a candidate who fails to file a statement required by this subsection within the time so required shall not appear on the state primary ballot, and the director shall inform the state secretary of any such failure. The state primary campaign expenditure limit agreed to under subsection (a) by any candidate shall be increased to the highest amount stated under this subsection by any opposing candidate who has not agreed to this limit.

(c) On or before the last day for filing withdrawals of nominations made at the state primary, every candidate for statewide office in the state election who has not agreed to abide by the expenditure limit under subsection (a), and who is opposed in that election by 1 or more candidates who have agreed to this limit, shall file with the director a statement, in a form prescribed by the director, of the maximum amount of expenditures to be made in his campaign for that primary. The name of a candidate who fails to file a statement required by this subsection within the time so required shall not appear on the state election ballot, and the director shall inform the state secretary of any such failure. The state election campaign expenditure limit agreed to under subsection (a) by any candidate shall be increased to the highest amount stated under this subsection by any opposing candidate who has not agreed to this limit.

(d) Any candidate appointed to fill a vacancy in a nomination for statewide elective office shall file the statement required by subsection (a) not later than the last day for filing the certificate of nomination to fill such vacancy. The time for opposing candidates to file the statements required by subsection (b) or (c), as the case may be, shall be extended accordingly.

(e) Any candidate who files a statement with the director under this section and who makes expenditures in excess of the limit established by this section, or in excess of the amount stated by said candidate pursuant to subsection (b) or (c), shall be punished by a fine of not more than the total of 2 times the amount of the expenditures in excess of said

limit or said amount, as the case may be, in addition to the penalties provided by section 12.

Section 2. On or before the ninth Tuesday before the primary election in any year in which elections are held for statewide elective office the state secretary shall determine and certify to the director and the state treasurer the names and addresses of all candidates for statewide elective office who qualify for the primary ballot and are opposed, by one or more candidates who have qualified for the same ballot in the primary election. For purposes of this chapter any candidate for statewide elective office for whom certificates of nomination and nomination papers have been filed in apparent conformity with law shall be considered qualified for the ballot notwithstanding any objections thereto that may be filed and notwithstanding any vacancy that may occur following the filing of such certificates of nominations and nomination papers other than a vacancy caused by withdrawal of a candidate within the time allowed by law. On or before the fifth Tuesday before the state election in any such year the state secretary shall determine and certify to the director and to the state treasurer the names and addresses of all candidates for statewide elective office who qualify for the state election ballot and are opposed by one or more candidates who have qualified for the state election ballot. For purposes of this chapter any candidate for statewide elective office for whom certificates of nomination and nomination papers have been filed in apparent conformity with law shall be considered qualified for the ballot, as provided with respect to candidates for the primary election, and any, such candidates nominated at the primary election shall be considered qualified for the ballot notwithstanding any objections thereto that may be filed and notwithstanding any vacancy that may occur other than a vacancy caused by withdrawal of a candidate within the time allowed by law. The state secretary shall promptly determine and certify to the director and state treasurer the name and address of any candidate that no longer qualifies for the primary or state election ballot or no longer has opposition because of death or withdrawal or ineligibility for office or because objections to certificates of nomination and nomination papers have been sustained or because of a recount or for any other like reason.

Section 3. The director shall determine and certify to the state treasurer those candidates for statewide elective office that are eligible for limited public financing as provided in sections 4 and 6 and shall determine and certify to the state treasurer the amounts due to each eligible candidate as provided in sections 5 and 7. The director shall prescribe and make available forms on which statements of qualifying contributions shall be filed by candidates, which statements shall contain the name and address of each individual making a contribution, the amount of the contribution and date of deposit, the cumulative total of all contributions made by that individual during the calendar year in which elections are held for statewide elective office and the next preceding calendar year and shall contain such other information and shall be organized in such a manner as the director may reasonably require to expedite the determinations required to be made by the director by this chapter. The director shall notify candidates of any amounts determined by the director to be due from candidates under section nine and shall direct that such amounts be paid to the state election campaign fund. On or before January 30 of any year next following a year in which elections are held for statewide elective office

the director shall prepare and submit a report relating to the matters entrusted to him under this chapter to the clerk of the senate and to the commission established by section 3 of chapter 55 and shall make copies of such report available to any person upon payment of the reasonable cost of copying or reproduction.

Section 4. Any candidate for statewide elective office certified by the state secretary under section 2 as qualifying for the ballot and having opposition in primary election shall be eligible to receive limited public financing of his primary election campaign, to the extent provided by section 5, on determination and certification by the director that the candidate (a) has filed a request for public financing with the director together with the bond required by section 8; (b) has filed with the director a statement under subsection (a) of section 1A agreeing to abide by the expenditure limits provided thereby; and (c) has received qualifying contributions as defined by section 1 in at least the following minimum amounts for the following statewide elective offices:

Governor	\$75,000
Lieutenant Governor	15,000
Attorney General	37,500
Secretary	15,000
Treasurer and Receiver General	15,000
Auditor	15,000

Only amounts appearing in statements of qualifying contributions filed with the director, in such form as he shall prescribe, shall be considered in determining whether any such minimum amount has been met. Determination and certification of the eligibility of candidates shall be made by the director on the eighth Tuesday before the primary and shall be based solely upon information contained in such statements as have been filed on or before the Friday next preceding said eighth Tuesday.

Section 5. Any candidate eligible to receive limited public financing of his primary election campaign shall, on determination and certification by the director, be entitled to an amount equal to \$1 for each one dollar of qualifying contributions as defined by section 1, subject to the following limitations: (a) no candidate shall be entitled to receive any amount in excess of the balance then remaining in the primary candidate account established for that candidate under section 42 of chapter 10; (b) nor shall any candidate be entitled to receive any amount in excess of the following maximum amounts for the following statewide elective offices:

Governor	\$750,000
Lieutenant Governor	312,500
Attorney General	312,500
Secretary	187,500
Treasurer and Receiver General	187,500
Auditor	187,500

Only amounts appearing in statements of qualifying contributions filed with the director, in such form as he shall prescribe, shall be considered in determining amounts to which candidates are entitled. Determinations and certifications of the amounts to which eligible candidates are entitled shall be made by the director on or before the eighth, sixth, fourth and second Tuesday before the primary election and shall be based solely upon information contained in such statements as have been filed prior to such dates.

Section 6. Any candidate for statewide elective office certified by the state secretary under section two as qualifying for the ballot and having opposition in the state election shall be eligible to receive limited public financing of his state election campaign, to the extent provided by section 7, on determination and certification by the director that the candidate (a) has filed a request for public financing with the director together with the bond required by section 8; (b) has filed with the director a statement under subsection (a) of section 1A agreeing to abide by the expenditure limits provided thereby; and (c) has received qualifying contributions as defined by section 1 in at least the following minimum amounts for the following statewide elective offices:

Governor and Lieutenant Governor	\$125,000
Attorney General	62,500
Secretary	25,000
Treasurer and Receiver General	25,000
Auditor	25,000

Only amounts appearing in statements of qualifying contributions filed with the director, in such form as he shall prescribe, shall be considered in determining whether any such minimum amount has been met. Determination and certification of the eligibility of candidates shall be made by the director on the fourth Tuesday before the state election and shall be based solely upon information contained in such statements as have been filed on or before the Friday next preceding said fourth Tuesday.

The fact that a qualifying contribution has previously been considered in determining eligibility for, or the extent of, public financing of a candidate's primary election campaign shall not prevent consideration of the same contribution in determining eligibility for public financing of such candidate's state election campaign.

Section 7. Any candidate eligible to receive limited public financing of his state election campaign shall, on determination and certification by the director, be entitled to an amount equal to \$1 for each one dollar of qualifying contributions as defined by section one subject to section nine and subject to the following limitations: (a) no candidate shall be entitled to receive any amount in excess of the balance then remaining in the state election candidate account established for that candidate under section 43 of chapter 10; (b) nor shall any candidate be entitled to receive any amount in excess of the following maximum amounts for the following statewide elective offices:

Governor and Lieutenant Governor	\$750,000
Attorney General	312,500
Secretary	187,500
Treasurer and Receiver General	187,500
Auditor	187,500

Only amounts appearing in statements of qualifying contributions filed with the director, in such form as he shall prescribe, shall be considered in determining amounts to which candidates are entitled. Determinations and certifications of the amounts to which eligible candidates are entitled shall be made by the director on or before the fourth and second Tuesday before the state election and shall be based solely upon information contained in such statements as have been filed prior to such dates.

The fact that a qualifying contribution has previously been considered in determining eligibility for, or the extent of, public financing of a candidate's primary election campaign shall not prevent consideration of the same contribution in determining the extent of public financing of such candidate's state election campaign.

Section 8. No candidate shall be eligible to receive public financing under this chapter unless and until the candidate deposits with the director a bond for the faithful compliance by such candidate and any political committee organized on his behalf with the provisions of this chapter. Such bond shall be in a form approved by the director, shall be signed by such candidate and the chairman and treasurer of any such committee, shall run to the commonwealth, shall be in force during the year in which elections for statewide elective office are held and for the following calendar year. The bond deposited for the purpose of receiving public financing for the primary election campaign must be for the amount which the comptroller has credited to the account established on behalf of that candidate for the primary election campaign. The bond deposited for the purpose of receiving public financing for the state election campaign must be for the amount which the comptroller has credited to the account established on behalf of that candidate for the state election campaign, but in the case of a candidate for governor, the bond on behalf of said candidate shall be in the amount which the comptroller has credited to the account established on behalf of that governor and lieutenant governor team.

On determination by the director that a candidate has failed to make the payments to the state treasurer required by section 9 the director may request the attorney general to bring an action in the name of the state treasurer upon the bond of such candidate and his political committee and may recover for the benefit of the state election campaign fund, up to the sum of such bond, any such payments so required. Any such action shall be in addition to remedies otherwise available by law and no action on any such bond shall preclude the director from bringing such other civil or criminal proceedings as may otherwise be provided by law.

Section 9. Within two weeks following any primary or state election for statewide elective office any candidate who has received public financing under this chapter shall file a statement with the director showing the balance remaining in the candidate's depository account as of the primary or state election less any reserve necessary to cover debts incurred to defray campaign expenditures incurred during such primary or state election. Except as provided in this section, any candidate having a surplus balance following any such primary or state election shall thereupon pay to the state treasurer for deposit to the State Election Campaign Fund an amount determined by multiplying such surplus balance by a fraction the numerator of which is the total amount of public financing received on account of such primary or state election campaign and the denominator of which is the sum of such public financing received and all contributions received by such candidate. No candidate having a surplus balance following the primary election shall be required to make any payment on account of such surplus if such candidate is certified by the state secretary under section 2 as qualifying for the ballot and having opposition in the state election and is certified by the director of campaign and political finance as eligible for public financing for the state election within 3 weeks following such primary election. In determining and certifying the amount to which any such candidate is entitled under section 7, the director shall reduce the amount that would otherwise be determined under that section by an amount equal to the amount that such candidate would be required to pay to the state treasurer under this section but for this sentence.

If the director determines that any portion of the payments made to an eligible candidate under this chapter was in excess of the aggregate amount of the payments to which the candidate was entitled he shall so notify the candidate and he shall thereupon pay to the state treasurer an amount equal to the excess amount.

If the director determines that any portion of the payments made to a candidate under this chapter for use in his primary election campaign or his state election campaign was used for any purpose other than to defray campaign expenditures in that campaign, or to repay loans the proceeds of which were used to defray campaign expenditures in that campaign, the director shall so notify the candidate and he shall thereupon pay an amount equal to the full amount so used to the state treasurer without regard to the source of the funds so used.

Any candidate who fails to pay an amount determined by the director to be due within 10 days of notice thereof shall be subject to a penalty of \$50 per day for every day that such amount remains unpaid.

Section 10. No candidate shall be required to accept public financing nor shall any candidate otherwise eligible for public financing be denied such financing solely because an opposing candidate declines to accept such financing.

Section 11. The director shall promulgate such rules and regulations as are necessary to effectuate the purposes of this chapter.

The director shall have the same power and authority to investigate the legality, validity, completeness and accuracy of all reports and actions required to be filed and taken by candidates pursuant to this chapter as is provided by section 3 of chapter 55 pertaining to campaign contributions and expenditures.

Section 12. Violation by any person of any provision of this chapter shall, in addition to any civil liabilities established by this chapter, be punished by imprisonment for not more than 1 year or by a fine of not more than on \$1,000, or both.

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